

The long arm of the EU? Evidence of Europeanization of Spatial Planning in Albania and Switzerland

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ERBLIN BERISHA, GIANCARLO COTELLA, ALYS SOLLY<sup>1</sup>

## THE LONG ARM OF THE EU? EVIDENCE OF EUROPEANIZATION OF SPATIAL PLANNING IN ALBANIA AND SWITZERLAND

### 1. Introduction

The concept of Europeanization has progressively entered spatial planning studies as a consistent approach for interpreting the complexity of outcomes resulting from almost thirty years of European spatial planning experiences (Faludi, 2010; Dühr *et al.*, 2010). Interestingly, this has occurred despite the lack of a formal mandate for spatial planning and territorial policies in the EU legislation. The roots of this phenomenon date back to the inclusion of the 'cohesion' objective in the EU Treaties in late 1980s – as the agreed condition for a balanced integration in terms of “levels of development of the various regions” (former Treaty Establishing the European Community, Art. 158) – that implied a factual engagement of the EU in territorial policies and allowed for the progressive consolidation of a EU territorial governance framework (Cotella, Janin Rivolin, 2015).

Whereas various authors have studied the Europeanization of spatial planning in EU member states (among others: Janin Rivolin, 2003; Giannakourou, 2005; Waterhout, 2007; Stead, Cotella, 2011; Maier, 2012), no significant contribution has yet explored the potential impact that the EU may exert over the SPSs of those countries which, despite not being part of the EU, are subject to the influence of the latter in one way or another – e.g. due to their participation in the EU pre-accession or neighbouring policy, or even to their voluntary participation in selected EU territorial initiatives.

In order to shed some light on the matter, the authors analyse the impact of Europeanization mechanisms on the SPSs of two countries that are in a very different relation with the EU. On the one hand, AL gained EU candidate status in 2014 and is currently undergoing accession negotiations. On the other hand, CH, despite having signed various bilateral agreement with the EU and voluntarily participating in a number of EU territorial actions, has never applied for EU membership. The contribution is structured into three sections. Following this brief introduction, section two presents the conceptual framework upon which the analysis has been built, sketching out the three channels of influence through which the Europeanization of spatial planning is explored. Sections three and four present the results of the analysis for AL and CH respectively. Section five rounds off the contribution, comparing the findings and discussing them in the light of the broader academic debate.

### 2. The Europeanization of spatial planning: theoretical and methodological approach

The study conceives Europeanization as an iterative cycle of uploading and downloading influences that links the EU-level territorial governance with the SPSs of the constituent countries (Cotella, Janin Rivolin, 2015). In this light, figure 1 symbolizes the mutual influences occurring between one supranational EU cycle and various national domestic cycles driven by (i) the SPSs of the various domestic domains (the small circle in the figure) and (ii) the EU-level territorial governance taking a similar form and “including” the domestic systems (the large circle in the figure).

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<sup>1</sup> Politecnico di Torino.



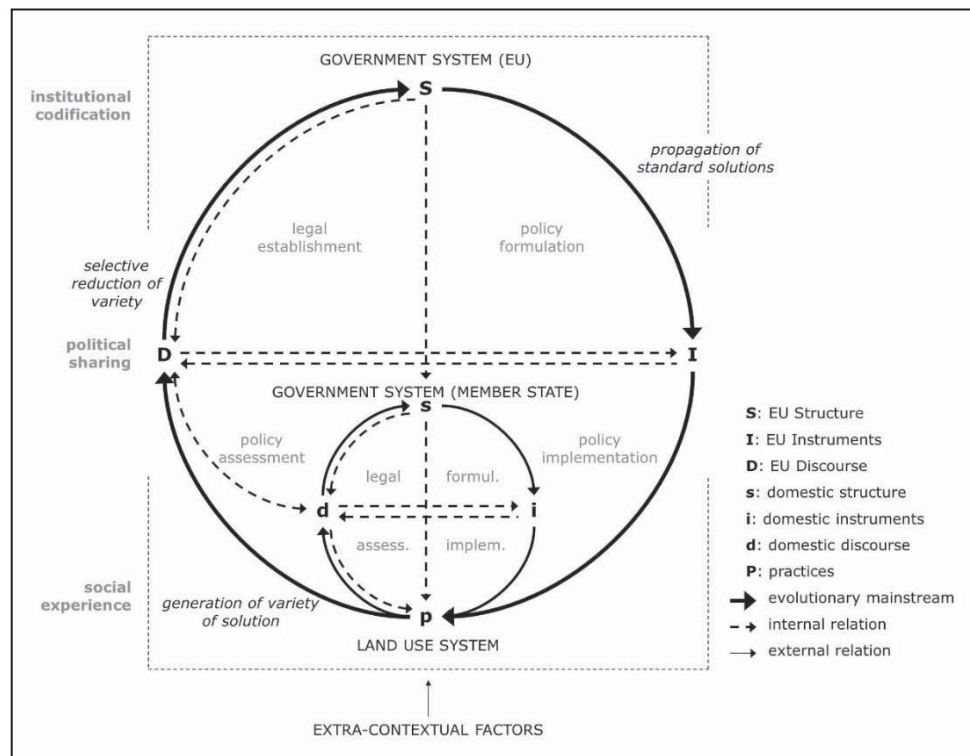


Figure 1. Relations between domestic and EU systems. Source: adapted from Cotella, Janin Rivolin, 2015.

Through an exploration of the relations linking the two realms, it is possible to analytically separate a number of channels of influences that links the EU and the Member states in the field of spatial planning. More in detail, the diagram allows for the identification of a typology of EU influences that includes (i) three types of top-down influence on domestic SPS respectively pivoted around EU legislation, policies and guidance documents and (ii) two types of bottom-up influence through which the European countries potentially influence EU policy-making.

Type of influence	Direction	Drivers of change	Mechanisms of change
Structural	Top-down	Rules	Legal conditionality
Instrumental		Resources	Economic conditionality
Dialogic top-down		Expert knowledge	Cognitive conditionality
Dialogic bottom-up	Bottom up	Expert knowledge	Cognitive conditionality
Practical		Interactive knowledge	Social learning

Table 1. Typology of influences in EU territorial governance. Source: adapted from Cotella, Janin Rivolin, 2015.

As the countries under scrutiny do not take part in the EU policy cycle, it is reasonable to assume that their influence on the development of EU territorial governance is rather limited. Due to this reason, the analysis focuses only on the top-down impacts that the EU has exerted on AL and CH SPSs. In this light, the following sections will analysis the impact of:

- *Structural influence*, i.e. the indirect impacts that the EU exerts through the development of sectoral legislation in various fields that have implications for spatial planning, such as the environment, energy, transport and competition.
- *Instrumental influence*, i.e. the introduction of recursive incentives for regional policy, systematic territorial cooperation, sustainable urban development etc., that modify the cost-benefit logics of domestic actors and enhance variations in established spatial planning practices.

- *Discursive influence, i.e. the result of discursive integration processes through which the concepts and ideas included in the EU guidance documents alter beliefs and expectations of domestic actors.*

More in detail, the impact of each channel of influence on the SPSs of AL and CH has been assessed both in terms of the significance of the impact – 0 = not significant; 1= scarcely significant; 2 = rather significant; 3 = highly significant – as well as the trend of such intensity – ↓ = decreasing; ↑ = increasing; ↔ = constant, ↕ = swinging. This preliminary synthetic assessment is substantiated through evidence collected through desk research and interviews.

### 3. Evidence from Albania

#### 3.1. *The traditional approach to spatial planning in Albania and changes since 1990*

Despite the relatively short period running between 1990 and 2016, AL<sup>2</sup> already faced important reforms that completely modified its SPSs from the traditional “urbanistika” approach to a more comprehensive approach to “territorial planning and development”. For long time spatial planning in AL has been characterized by a highly hierarchized system where national interests took precedence over local priorities. Despite the fall of the Soviet bloc the introduction of new laws (above all in 1993 and 1998) the logic of urban planning, perceived as a technical and regulative process through which to address urban and territorial development, dominated the spatial planning experience until 2009, when a more radical reform took place, followed by the present law on spatial planning and development passed in 2014. Thanks to the last reforms, the scope of planning has shifted from urban planning to an inclusive territorial planning where sectoral policies and planning levels are mutually interconnected. However, in spite of several crucial changes involving different aspects of planning, like procedures, instruments, competences and responsibilities at the central and local level (excluding from any important responsibility the meso level – Qarku), plan contents, objects and principles, the procedure of allocation of the development rights have remained almost unaltered.

#### 3.2. *The impact of the EU on the Albanian territorial governance and spatial planning system*

Since the Stabilization and Association Agreement entered into force in 2009, the Albanian EU integration path has been faster than ever. As a matter of fact, AL reached the status of Candidate Country in June 2014 showing a progressive integration attitude in transposing EU directives. One year before, precisely in June 2013, the policy paper for the territorial planning and development AL, launched by the Ministry of Urban Planning and Tourism, was adopted. This document explicitly recognises the need for a ‘Europeanization’ of spatial planning as one of the main challenges for the country, and defines it as an increasing process that will influence the Albanian planning system, both in terms of policies and practices. More in detail, the document states the intention to align the SPS to the ESDP, to the EU sectorial directives, and to the Europe 2020 Strategy. This evidence confirms the domestic SPS general intention to move towards a EU inspired planning system, despite the absence of any formal obligation in this concern.

##### 3.2.1. *Structural influence: the impact of EU sectoral legislation*

Despite the fact that AL is currently only a Candidate Country, the process of EU Directives transposition has already deeply affected its legislative framework. Numerous laws are transposed in several policy sectors interconnected to territorial governance and spatial planning. As illustrated in table 2, the major influences derive from the environmental and transport legislation and from the pre-accession negotiation, while there is less impact from competition and energy. The influence intensity is different in respect of the levels while the trend is generally increasing.

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<sup>2</sup> AL is a republic that has three administrative level with different degree of responsibility in the field of spatial planning: the national level, the meso level represented by Qarku and the local level. However, the meso level has less competences than national and local level.

	National level		Sub-national level		Local level	
	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend
EU competition legislation	1	↑	0	↔	1	↑
EU energy legislation	1	↑	0	↔	1	↑
EU environmental legislation	3	↑	0	↔	2	↑
EU transport legislation	2	↑	0	↔	1	↑
Pre-accession negotiation	2	↑	0	↔	1	↑

Table 2. Evaluation of the EU sectoral Legislation impact on SPS in AL. Source: authors' elaboration.

More in detail, the EU impacted by updating the existing legislative framework and/or introducing new laws, above all transposing the EU Environmental legislation. Hence innovation has been introduced by the Directive on Environmental Impact Assessment (2011/92/EU), the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC), the Directive on Habitat (92/43/EEC), the Water Framework Directive (2008/105/EC). Secondly, the EU directive implementation produced a significant institutional restructuring promoting new institutions like NAPA-National Agency for Protected Area, NEA-National Environmental Agency and several departments. Moreover, the directives' transposition induced changes promoting new strategic and action plan instruments like the NES-National Energy Strategy, Marine Environmental Strategy, National Environmental Strategy, National Transport Plan and the Sectoral Transport Strategy. Even more important, changes have involved the planning procedure introducing the EIA-Environmental Impact Assessment, the SEA-Strategic Environmental Assessment and potentially the certification of building energy conformity (still to be adopted). Last but not least, the transposition of the EU directives and their implementation are responsible for introducing new concepts and paradigms in the AL SPS.

### 3.2.2. Instrumental Influence: the impact of EU policy

As a candidate state, in AL the influence of the EU policies has impacted less. As illustrated in table 3, in the case of both EU cohesion policy and EU urban policy no impact has been registered while little influence has been listed for European territorial cooperation. Similarly, rural development policy seems to have a moderate impact while, on the contrary, pre-accession and neighbourhood policy seems to have a significant impact. As can be observed, the impacts are different in each planning level while the trend is increasing.

	National level		Sub-national level		Local level	
	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend
EU cohesion policy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
European territorial cooperation	1	↑	0	↔	1	↑
EU urban policy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EU rural development policy	2	↑	0	↔	1	↑
Pre-accession and neighbourhood policy	3	↑	0	↔	1	↑

Table 3. Evaluation of the EU policy impact on SPS in AL. Source: authors' elaboration.

Overall, some aspects shall be underlined in order to highlight the main changes in AL due to the EU impact. First of all, the introduction of the programming period has obliged AL to align its programming period to the EU. Secondly, the introduction of the strategic approach was the basis for the launching of several strategic plans and programs. The promotion of the integration approach has contributed to transform the sectoral perspective to a more adequate cross sectoral one. More in de-



tail, regarding the EU pre-accession and neighbouring policy – at the national level several strategic programs have been launched in different fields aiming at applying the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). In fact, the CBC-Cross Border Cooperation segment of the IPA fund is playing an important role in sharing competences and projects across neighbouring countries. In this respect, several initiatives have been undertaken to harmonize national (strategic) and local planning instruments. While, referring to the EU rural development policy, AL is part to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) through IPA rural development funds. As a consequence of CAP's provisions and indications, several strategic plans were launched (among other, Rural Development Program 2014-2020 funded by IPA, Inter-Sectoral Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development 2014-2020).

### 3.2.3. Dialogic Influence: the impact of the EU Discourse

As mentioned above, the registered shifting from urban planning and urbanism logics to a territorial planning and development approach is not just a legislative aspect, but is fully related to the conceptual metamorphosis from urban planning to a spatial planning approach.

	National level		Sub-national level		Local level	
	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend
EU development strategies <sup>3</sup>	2	↑	0	↔	1	↑
EU spatial policy documents <sup>4</sup>	2	↑	0	↔	1	↑
EU urban agenda <sup>5</sup>	1	↑	0	↔	1	↑
ESPON Programme <sup>6</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 4. Evaluation of the EU discourse impact on SPS in AL. Source: authors' elaboration.

In this regard, the EU discourse, in particular, and of the international discourses, in general, played a crucial role on influencing the national spatial planning discourse. As shown in table 4, except the ESPON programme that does not produce substantial effects (Albania neither took part to the programme, nor was targeted by its studies), some relevant influence was exerted through a number of EU development strategies and spatial policy documents as well as through the EU urban agenda.

Indeed, analysing the large number of national strategies, documents, policy guidelines, recommendations, plans and etc., it seems that the ESDP guidelines (above all) have had a conspicuous impact on the spatial planning AL discourse, however not often translating into practice. Concepts as polycentric development, subsidiarity, rural development, integrated transport system, conservation of natural and cultural heritage, etc., have become hegemonic concepts within the domestic discourse (Cotella, Berisha, 2016a, b). Other topics such as decentralization and self-government coming from EU directives and general recommendation are fully addressed in the planning debate. However, as had happened in other contexts, the incorporation of these notions in different planning documents has been often misinterpreted and not well contextualized for different local reasons like political will, lack of expertise at the local level, and lack of academic debate (Cotella *et al.*, 2012; Adams *et al.*, 2013). Most importantly, in fact, the domestic territorial knowledge community until now appeared unpre-

<sup>3</sup> The EU development strategies includes the Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategies and the EU2020 Strategy.

<sup>4</sup> The EU spatial policy documents include the ESDP, the EU Territorial Agenda, the EU Territorial Agenda 2020, the EC Green paper on territorial cohesion.

<sup>5</sup> The EU urban agenda and related documents includes the Green paper on the urban environment, the Leipzig Charter on sustainable cities, and all the documents developed within the European Commission Urban Development Group.

<sup>6</sup> The ESPON programme include applied research projects, targeted analyses, the development of visual representations of the European territory in forms of maps and scenarios, the development of the ESPON database.

pared to receive and literally translate EU notions in the local language and/or often the translation is incorrect and in certain cases the using of foreign terminology generated misunderstandings.

#### **4. Evidence from Switzerland**

##### **4.1. The traditional approach to spatial planning in Switzerland and changes since 1990**

In CH<sup>7</sup>, spatial planning methods and issues have changed considerably in recent years and the planning process is moving towards more flexibility and a strategic management of the territory, integrating the concept of sustainability, supporting private-public partnerships and negotiation-oriented planning (Gerber, 2016). The country's use of direct democracy to face land use challenges is particularly relevant in this regard, as can be seen in the 2013 referendum. On 3 March 2013, the Swiss population was called to vote on whether to limit building land, tightening the Federal Law on land use. This referendum led to the 2014 partial revision of the 1979 Federal Law on Spatial Planning, which, together with the 1999 Federal Constitution, is the legal structure of the territorial development of the country. The Federal Government has proposed a second phase of the 2014 partial revision of the Federal Law of Spatial Planning, and is drawing up a project together with the cantons and municipalities, gradually involving other interested groups<sup>8</sup>.

##### **4.2. The impact of the EU on the Swiss territorial governance and spatial planning system**

Because CH is not an EU member, the influence of EU policies is stronger than that of EU directives and sectoral legislation. This can be seen in the increasing adoption and implementation of new cycles of European policies, such as the current Interreg and URBACT projects. Nevertheless, the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) points out that it is vital for a small country like CH, whose cantons and infrastructure are closely bound up with those of its European neighbours, to maintain a close dialogue with partners outside its borders. With this in mind, ARE, on its website, declares its intention to pursue the following goals: «we want to contribute actively to European spatial planning; we are seeking to integrate our urban system into that of the rest of Europe; and we are striving for the closest possible cooperation among Europe's rural and Alpine regions»<sup>9</sup>. In any case, compared to the past, an increasing involvement in EU activities and projects can be detected.

##### **4.2.1. Structural Influence: the impact of EU sectoral legislation**

As noted above, CH is not a member of the EU and so there is no legal conditionality pushing for the transposition of EU sectoral legislation on the country's SPS. There is, however, a certain amount of indirect influence and there are shared initiatives, such as the bilateral agreements and the EU projects in which CH participates. In fact, as we can see from table 5, there has been an increase of attention in: energy legislation (e.g. open new opportunities in the market of renewable energy throughout Europe; Swiss goals largely correspond to the EU's targets); environmental legislation (e.g. the creation of the Emerald Network in November 2016); transport legislation (e.g. the Gotthard tunnel opened in December 2016; the national policy takes into major consideration the key European transport corridors).

CH has been negotiating with the EU on a bilateral agreement in the electricity sector since 2007, also to better regulate cross-border electricity trading. As can be observed in the Swiss Energy Strate-

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<sup>7</sup> CH is a federal republic and has three main levels of government, each involved in planning: the national or confederation level, the cantonal and the local level. The Cantons especially have considerable autonomy.

<sup>8</sup> The consultation phase has ended on 15 May 2015 and towards the middle of 2017 the Federal Council will take a decision on implementation.

<sup>9</sup> [www.are.admin.ch](http://www.are.admin.ch).

gy 2050 on renewable energies, the country is pursuing its own goals which mainly correspond to EU's targets. Moreover, since 18 November 2016, CH, together with Belarus and Ukraine, has officially adopted the Emerald Network, the equivalent of Natura 2000 in non EU countries. As regards the impact of EU transport legislation, the national transport policy and planning takes into major consideration key European transport corridors, such as the Rhine-Alpine Corridor.

	National level		Sub-national level		Local level	
	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend
EU competition legislation	1	↔	0	↔	1	↔
EU energy legislation	2	↑	1	↑	1	↑
EU environmental legislation	2	↑	1	↑	1	↑
EU transport legislation	2	↑	1	↑	1	↑
Pre-accession negotiation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 5. Evaluation of the EU sectoral Legislation impact on SPS in CH. Source: authors' elaboration.

#### 4.2.2. Instrumental Influence: the impact of EU policy

The implementation and influence of European policies, through projects such as Interreg and URBACT, has led to increased trans-national cooperation and encouraged dialogue, especially in the Swiss cross-border regions and municipalities. Indeed, the Interreg incentive programme and its projects are important for CH and constitute a significant part of the Swiss regional policy. As regards URBACT, all Swiss cities can participate as partners in the network, developing international contacts, exchanging experiences and disseminating knowledge with other cities facing similar challenges to theirs. The influence of EU policies can also be seen in the creation of the New Regional Policy (NRP) which promotes European territorial cooperation, as well as innovation, value creation and competitiveness in a sustainable way. In general, current Swiss regional policy can be considered to be increasingly designed to establish competitive, supraregional, supracantonal and international value creation systems (see tab. 6).

Although CH is not a member of the EU and therefore outside direct implementation of EU Cohesion Policy, it nevertheless makes an independent contribution to EU Cohesion Policy (Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA, December 2016).

	National level		Sub-national level		Local level	
	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend
EU cohesion policy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
European territorial cooperation	2	↑	2	↑	1	↔
EU urban policy	2	↑	1	↔	2	↑
EU rural development policy <sup>10</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pre-accession and neighbourhood policy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 6. Evaluation of the EU policy impact on SPS in CH. Source: authors' elaboration.

For example, with the enlargement contribution (Memorandum of Understanding with the Euro-

<sup>10</sup> Because of its traditional strong respect for local identities and procedures, Swiss rural development policy follows national legislation rather than EU directives, and is highly localised at both the cantonal and communal level.



pean Community of 27 February 2006), CH participates in the reduction of economic and social disparities within the enlarged European Union (implemented with the ten bilateral framework agreements signed in Bern on 20th December 2007). CH is currently participating in Interreg V (A-B-C) for the programming year 2014-2020 (e.g. Alpine Space). Indeed, the Interreg projects have increasingly strengthened cooperation and encouraged dialogue in the Swiss cross border regions and municipalities<sup>11</sup>. As regards the impact of EU urban policy, URBACT III (2014-2020) includes the EU countries as well as CH and Norway. The cities of Zurich, Basel and Lugano have been participating in URBACT projects, improving and strengthening the partnership and cooperation with neighbouring municipalities. Moreover, on a macroeconomic scale, Swiss agricultural policy has followed a historical path similar to that of the EU Common Agricultural Policy.

#### 4.2.3. Dialogic Influence: the impact of EU Discourse

EU policy documents, strategies and initiatives, such as the ESDP, have brought, to a certain extent, changes within the Swiss planning discourse (see tab. 7). For example, CH shares the same aims as the ESDP, such as 'a polycentric urban development and a new relationship between urban and rural areas, 'equal access for all European regions to infrastructure and know-how', and 'prudent management of the natural and cultural heritage' (OECD, 2002, p. 91).

	National level		Sub-national level		Local level	
	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend	Intensity	Trend
EU development strategies	1	↔	0	↔	0	↔
EU spatial policy documents	1	↓	0	↔	0	↔
EU urban agenda	1	↑	0	↔	1	↑
ESPON Programme	1	↑	0	↔	0	↔

Table 7. Evaluation of the EU discourse impact on SPS in CH. Source: authors' elaboration.

According to the OECD (2002, p. 91), even though CH is not an EU member and is not included in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), the country commented on the first draft during the process of preparation. Yet, CH has been witnessing a «fading level of interest in the application of ESDP ideas» (ESPON, 2006, p. 106). Since 2002, CH has also been participating in ESPON programmes. ARE, on its website, declares that the participation in the ESPON programme has also helped CH establish a number of valuable relationships and build up its own international network of long-term international partners. Moreover, since the late 1990s, integrated approaches to urban development have become increasingly important in CH.

## 5. Discussion: The long arm of the EU?

As argued by several authors, the Europeanization of a planning system can be observed from different perspectives (Cotella, Janin Rivolin, 2015). Researchers like Janin Rivolin and Faludi (2005) link this influence to the consolidation of an EU multi-level governance framework, while others emphasize the process of institutional transformation of the domestic context (Giannakourou, 2005; Maier, 2012) or suggest focusing attention on discursive integration processes that lead to co-generation and more or less structured exchange of knowledge (Böhme, 2002; Adams *et al.*, 2011; Cotella *et al.*, 2012). The richness and variety of interpretations are, however, complementary to each other. Be this as it

<sup>11</sup> A new transnational instrument also addresses EU macro-regional strategy for the Alpine Region (EU-SALP), involving Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland.

may, scarce attention has been dedicated until now to the potential impact that the EU may exert upon aspirant members or neighbouring countries that have no intention to join.

Building on this awareness, this contribution aims to answer a guiding question, i.e. whether the long arm of the EU reaches out to these countries too and, if so, how. Table 8 compares how structural influences affect the SPS in AL and CH. As shown above, there are some areas, especially competition and energy, that have the same impact both at the national and local level<sup>12</sup>. Similarities are present also regarding transport and environmental legislation. It is interesting to note that the EU has influenced both countries in a similar way despite the different integration perspectives. In this light, one could argue that AL's willingness to join the EU has been balanced by CH's pragmatic attitude, that has led it to establish mutually beneficial cooperation with the EU.

	AL			CH		
	National	Sub-national	Local	National	Sub-national	Local
EU competition legislation	1↑	0↔	1↑	1↔	0 ↔	1↔
EU energy legislation	1↑	0↔	1↑	2↑	1↑	1↑
EU environmental legislation	3↑	0↔	2↑	2↑	1↑	1↑
EU transport legislation	2↑	0↔	1↑	2↑	1↑	1↑
Pre-accession negotiation (if applicable)	2↑	0↔	1↑	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 8. Comparison of the structural impacts between AL and CH. Source: authors' elaboration.

When it comes to analysing the instrumental impacts (see tab. 9), certain differences emerge. As illustrated, excluding the territorial cooperation area, where the impact is relatively high in CH and less important in AL, the majority of areas are not comparable at all. This diversity is mainly based on the fact that AL is not allowed to participate in EU cohesion and urban policy, while CH has made bilateral agreements with the EU to be included in some policies and projects, and has also contributed to certain areas of EU Cohesion policy.

	AL			CH		
	National	Sub-national	Local	National	Sub-national	Local
EU cohesion policy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
European territorial cooperation	1↑	0↔	1↑	2↑	2↑	1↔
EU urban policy	N/A	N/A	N/A	2↑	1↔	2
EU rural development policy	2↑	0↔	1↑	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pre-accession and neighbourhood policy	3↑	0↔	1↑	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 9. Comparison of the instrumental impacts between AL and CH. Source: authors' elaboration.

<sup>12</sup> The subnational level for AL has not been affected at all.

Finally, table 10 compares the dialogic impacts on the two countries. As has been highlighted, the EU discourse seems to have much more impact in AL than in CH due to two main reasons. First, because CH has only been partially involved, for example submitting comments during the draft process of the documents (e.g. for the ESDP). The second reason is much more path dependent; indeed, while CH's SPS developed throughout the past century in a comprehensive integrated way, AL's SPS developed within the context of the communist bloc, hence has needed to align to the western type economic model as well as to EU concepts and its discursive arena.

To conclude, the contribution shows that the long arm of the EU is able to influence EU non-member States SPSs to a variable extent, and this influence largely depends on multiple issues, foremost among which are the actual motivation of a country to interact with the EU, as well as the path-dependent logics that permeate that country's domestic context.

	AL			CH		
	National	Sub-national	Local	National	Sub-national	Local
EU development strategies	2↑	0↔	1↑	1↔	0↔	0↔
EU spatial policy documents	2↑	0↔	1↑	1↓	0↔	0↔
EU urban agenda	1↑	0↔	1↑	1↑	0↔	1↑
ESPON Programme	N/A	N/A	N/A	1↑	0↔	0↔

Table 10. Comparison of the dialogic impacts between AL and CH. Source: authors' elaboration.

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